

# RUSSELL NORTHE MLA

## Member for Morwell

MARCH 2016

### Community newsletter

#### Labor keeps expensive AFL parade holiday

The Andrews Labor Government has announced it will keep the AFL parade public holiday for at least another two years, despite its huge cost to local businesses.

Many local businesses were forced to shut their doors, cut staff or operate at a loss on the first parade holiday last year.

Impacted small businesses across the state reported losses ranging between \$1000 and \$5000 as a direct result of the parade holiday.

The penalty rates were too expensive for many local businesses last year, so they closed or cut staff shifts on the AFL parade day.

The new holiday is for a parade in Melbourne, not a local event, so there isn't an increase in patronage to help to cover the extra wages costs. In fact, on my observation and feedback towns in the Morwell electorate were very quiet on this day.

I ran a survey to assess the business community's views on the holiday and there was overwhelming opposition from those surveyed.

Of 105 respondents, 98 per cent were opposed to the holiday and the feedback more generally from the business community indicated strong opposition to the new public holidays instigated by the Andrews Government.

One of the biggest disappointments relayed to me was that this holiday was announced without any consultation with the small business sector and the consultation that eventually took place was after the holiday had been determined.

The Andrews Labor Government should be creating new jobs in rural and regional Victoria, but instead it was making life harder for regional businesses and causing casual workers to lose their shifts.

Why should rural and regional businesses suffer for a parade 150 kilometres away in Melbourne?

This is yet another city-centric decision by the Andrews Labor Government.



#### Out & About...



Thanks to the team at Headspace Morwell for their hospitality recently. A great organisation assisting our local youth!



Great to attend Churchill Primary School and Grey Street Primary School recently to present student leaders with their badges. Well done to all student leaders for being elected to your respective positions!

## Churchill Neighbourhood Centre



Great to drop by the Churchill Neighbourhood Centre recently and catch up with Sheena in the community garden. The team at Churchill Neighbourhood Centre do some fantastic work!

## Morwell Girl Guides



Well done to the Morwell Girl Guides for working hard to clean up around Kernot Lake Morwell as part of "Clean up Australia Day" activities. Great job girls!

## Fed Uni O-Week



Great to speak with students at the Fed Uni Gippsland Market Day recently. We got to meet some fantastic people and listen to what matters most to our local students.

## Nationals continue fight for Public Indoor Heated Pool

Shadow Minister for Regional Development and Sport Damian Drum was recently at the Traralgon Outdoor Pool to highlight the need for Government funding for a new public indoor heated pool.

Mr Drum was invited by local Members Russell Northe and Melina Bath to inspect the pool and listen to local constituents about the need for an upgraded Traralgon pool complex.

This is an issue that has huge support in our community with a petition signed by more than 3,500 people from Traralgon and the wider Gippsland area and I plan on keeping up the fight to see this community get the indoor heated pool it desperately wants.

Prior to the 2014 election the Liberal-Nationals Coalition pledged \$9 million to support Latrobe City Council's proposal for a \$30 million public indoor heated pool.

The Andrews Labor Government has still not pledged any funding or support for upgrading Traralgon's pool and it's extremely disappointing to see a worthy local project over-looked.

Traralgon's population is around 28,000 people and is the only town in all of regional Victoria that does not have a public heated indoor pool with a population of that size.



Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation Damian Drum and community members showing their support for a new Public Indoor Heated Pool for Traralgon.



## IN PARLIAMENT

This month in Parliament I spoke on:

VLine

Whilst the Labor government tries to spin its way out of the ongoing V/Line debacle, the impact upon Gippsland commuters continues. My office has been contacted by a number of locals over the last week who conveyed their frustration at the ongoing disruption to Gippsland rail services.

This is simply not good enough when you consider that at the same time Gippsland commuters have endured enormous disruption and hardship over these past weeks.

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